

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 562
By Fowlkes

A RESOLUTION to designate April 22, 1996 as "Ross Bass Day"
in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, from time to time, this General Assembly has seen fit to specially recognize those exemplary citizens who, during their lifetime, contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of this state and nation; and

WHEREAS, former U.S. Senator Ross Bass was a distinguished gentleman whose name was synonymous with effective public service and integrity in government; and

WHEREAS, in 1946, he was appointed U.S. Postmaster for Pulaski by Congressman Joe L. Evins; he served his fellow citizens with dedication and skill in this position until he resigned in 1954 to run for the U.S. Congress in the old Sixth Congressional District; and

WHEREAS, the people of the Sixth Congressional District evinced their faith in his probity and talents as a public official and elected Ross Bass to five consecutive terms in the U.S. Congress; and

WHEREAS, while a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Bass served with industry and acumen on the Agriculture Committee and became the youngest person selected by his fellow congressmen to serve on the prestigious Ways and Means Committee; and

WHEREAS, Ross Bass was renowned among his peers and constituents as a congressman who had the courage of his convictions and who was willing to cast unpopular votes; and

WHEREAS, although he represented a so-called “tobacco district”, he was one of the first members of Congress to support legislation to place health warning labels on cigarette packages; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bass attracted national attention when he voted for the 1964 Civil Rights Act, being the only Southern congressman to do so; civil rights activists praised his courage; and

WHEREAS, his sterling career in the U.S. House of Representatives was interrupted only by his decision to resign and seek the office of the U.S. Senate to fill the unexpired term of Senator Estes Kefauver; and

WHEREAS, Ross Bass thus became the only person ever elected to the U.S. Senate from Giles County; he served astutely as a member of the Upper House until 1967; and

WHEREAS, Senator Bass served on the Agriculture and Commerce Committee where he was instrumental in passing federal highway legislation which continues to fund important highway programs in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the Senate, Ross Bass worked assiduously and with considerable success to secure approval of the Tim’s Ford Dam, an increase in TVA’s self-financing capacity and funding to complete the Land Between the Lakes National Park; and

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1993, Ross Bass departed this life for a far better existence; and

WHEREAS, on October 6, 1993, the 103rd U.S. Congress enacted Public Law 103-97 redesignating the Pulaski U.S. Post Office as the “Ross Bass Post Office Building”, an honor most befitting this exemplary citizen and his indelible legacy of selfless public service; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 1996, the City of Pulaski and Giles County will begin their respective Tennessee Bicentennial celebrations with a ceremony renaming the Pulaski Post Office in honor of Senator Bass; and

WHEREAS, a portrait of Senator Bass has been commissioned by his widow, Mrs. Jacqueline Bass, and donated to the City of Pulaski; this portrait will be unveiled at the ceremony and hung in the Post Office; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should appropriately recognize this momentous occasion to honor one of the greatest Tennesseans of the 20th century; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That in memory of a man of the people whose many contributions to the greater good will not soon be equaled or forgotten, April 22, 1996 is hereby designated as "Ross Bass Day" in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we commemorate the designation of the Pulaski U.S. Post Office in honor of the late Senator Ross Bass, reflecting fondly upon his meritorious service to Tennessee as a distinguished member of both Houses of the U.S. Congress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.